

Resolution of the
West Coast Corridor Coalition

November 2003

WHEREAS, the States of Alaska, Washington, Oregon and California represent an economy that as a separate nation would be 4th largest in the world;

WHEREAS, the West Coast states are the nation's vital gateway on the Pacific Rim whose seaports and transportation corridors handle over 50 percent of containerized goods entering or leaving the United States;

WHEREAS, West Coast states are key links in North American trade with Canada and Mexico, and are major domestic origins and destinations in their own right as interconnected centers of economic growth and development;

WHEREAS, the West Coast states, as the nexus of Asia-Pacific and NAFTA trade, play a unique role in growing the national economy while protecting national security, enabling the nation to receive significant benefits that include jobs, economic output, and tax revenues from trade in agricultural and manufactured goods and products;

WHEREAS, West Coast states, regions and gateway communities bear a disproportionate share of the cost and congestion impacts in handling international trade, including transportation system demands and infrastructure deterioration, safety and security challenges, environmental pollution, and community disruption;

WHEREAS, the current and proposed West Coast share of national transportation funding reflects neither its share of total trade value nor the disproportionate burden it carries in supporting the capital investments required to handle the flow of trade;

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration and the Congress are considering the reauthorization of transportation programs currently authorized in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21);

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration has offered The Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2003 (SAFETEA) as its reauthorization proposal authorizing \$247 billion for highway, safety and public transportation programs over six years;

WHEREAS, SAFETEA includes several important provisions to improve the movement of international and domestic cargo, but does not provide significant new funds to meet the critical transportation infrastructure

needs facing West Coast states as they address the growth impacts of international and domestic trade;

WHEREAS, the West Coast Corridor Coalition has been formed to highlight the importance to the nation of the West Coast states in trade and transportation activity, and the critical national need to increase investment in West Coast transportation facilities and operations;

AND WHEREAS, the West Coast Corridor Coalition includes a diverse multistate representation of state and regional transportation officials, port executives, shippers, railroad and trucking companies, terminal operators, engineering firms, and labor organizations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The West Coast Corridor Coalition applauds the Bush Administration and the Congress for placing within SAFETEA a greater emphasis on goods movement in the context of economic vitality, quality of life, and freight mobility investments that enhance personal mobility;

The West Coast Corridor Coalition calls upon the Bush Administration and the U.S. Congress to strengthen and expand the transportation reauthorization in the following manner:

- a) SAFETEA should affirm as national policy the enhancement of transportation systems that facilitate goods movement, consistent with the goals of achieving economic development, national security and safety;
- b) SAFETEA should back this policy with a commensurate commitment of resources; specifically, six-year authorizations should be increased significantly over the levels proposed in the Administration's proposal;
- c) SAFETEA, as part of these expanded authorizations, should provide the funding capacity and flexibility to enable increased investment in the freight transportation system;
- d) SAFETEA should provide additional funding to West Coast states, regions, and local agencies to recognize cost burdens and mitigate adverse impacts on communities that must site and pay for project expansions that serve the rising volumes of global trade to and from the rest of North America; and
- e) SAFETEA should support multistate, multi-regional public and private sector partnership approaches to plan, fund, and develop transportation system improvements that relieve congestion related to goods movement, improve operational efficiency, and rehabilitate transportation infrastructure.

The West Coast Corridor Coalition shall distribute this resolution to decision-makers and interested parties, as appropriate to participation in the process of developing SAFETEA in its final form for adoption as federal policy.